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- **Rate simplification.** States will be allowed one state rate and a second state rate in limited circumstances (food and drugs). Each local jurisdiction will be allowed one local rate. A state or local government may not choose to tax telecommunications services, for example, at one rate and all other items of tangible personal property or taxable services at another rate. State and local governments will accept responsibility for notice of rate and boundary changes at restricted times.
- **State level tax administration of all state and local sales and use taxes.** Businesses will no longer file tax returns with each local government within which it conducts business in a state. Each state will provide a central point of administration for all state and local sales and use taxes and the distribution of the local taxes to the local governments. A state and its local governments will use common tax bases.
- **Uniform sourcing rules.** The states will have uniform and simple rules for how they will source transactions to state and local governments. The uniform rules will be destination/delivery based and uniform for tangible personal property, digital property, and services.
- **Simplified exemption administration for use- and entity-based exemptions.** Sellers are relieved of the “good faith” requirements that exist in current law and will not be liable for uncollected tax. Purchasers will be responsible for paying the tax, interest and penalties for claiming incorrect exemptions. States will have a uniform exemption certificate in paper and electronic form.
- **Uniform audit procedures.** Sellers who participate in one of the certified Streamlined Sales Tax System technology models will either not be audited or will have limited scope audits, depending on the technology model used. The states may conduct joint audits of large multi-state businesses.
- **State funding of the system.** To reduce the financial burdens on sellers, states will assume responsibility for funding some of the technology models. The states are also participating in a joint business – government study of the costs of collection on sellers.

The Project proposes that states change their sales and use tax laws to conform with the simplifications as proposed by the Project. Thus, the simplifications would apply to all sellers. Sellers who do not have a physical presence or “nexus” are not required to collect sales and use taxes unless Congress chooses to require collection from all sellers for all types of commerce. Sellers without a physical presence can volunteer to collect under the proposed simplifications. Registration by sellers to voluntarily collect sales and use taxes will not infer that the business must pay business activity taxes, such as the corporate franchise or income tax.

The Streamlined Sales Tax System will provide sellers the opportunity to use one of three technology models. A seller may use Model 1 where a Certified Service Provider, compensated by the states, will perform all of the seller's sales tax functions. A seller may use Model 2, a Certified Automated System, to perform only the tax calculation function. A larger seller with nationwide sales that has developed its own proprietary sales tax software may use Model 3 and have its own system certified by the states collectively. However, some sellers may choose to continue to use their current systems and still enjoy the benefits of the Project's simplifications.

The Streamlined Sales Tax Project envisions two components to the legislation necessary to accomplish the Project's goals. First, states would adopt enabling legislation referred to as the Uniform Sales and Use Tax Administration Act ("Act"). The Act allows the state to enter into an agreement with one or more states to simplify and modernize sales and use tax administration in order to reduce the burden of tax compliance for all sellers and all types of commerce. The Act does not require any amendments to a state's sales and use tax law.

Secondly, states would amend or modify their sales and use tax laws to achieve the simplifications and uniformity required by the participating states working together. The Project refers to this legislation as the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement ("Agreement"). Some states will require only minor changes to current law to implement the requirements of the Agreement. Other states with more complicated sales tax laws may require significant changes to current law to be in accord with the Agreement.

A certificate of compliance will document each state's compliance with the provisions of the Agreement and cite applicable statutes, rules or regulations, or other authorities supporting such compliance. Public notice and comment will be provided before a state becomes part of the interstate Agreement. A state is in compliance with the Agreement if the effect of the state's laws, rules or regulations, and policies is substantially compliant with each of the requirements of the Agreement. If a state is found to be out of compliance with the Agreement, it will not be accepted into the interstate Agreement or will be sanctioned or expelled by the other participating states. In a voluntary system, sellers who are voluntarily collecting sales taxes for participating states may decide to no longer collect for the expelled state. Also, that state may not have a vote on changes in the Agreement.

A governing board will be comprised of representatives of each member state of the Agreement. Each member state is entitled to one vote on the governing board. The governing board is responsible for interpretations of the Agreement, amendments to the Agreement, and issue resolution. A State and Local Government Advisory Council and a Business and Taxpayer Advisory Council from the private sector will advise the governing board.

On November 12, 2002, thirty states and the District of Columbia approved the interstate Agreement provisions. States will move forward in 2003 and enact the conforming legislation. The Agreement will become effective when at least ten states with twenty percent of the total population of all states imposing a state sales tax have enacted the conforming legislation and are found to be in compliance with the requirements of the Agreement.

It's anticipated that states that enact the conforming legislation and are found to be in compliance with the Agreement will continue as the governing states of the interstate Agreement of the future.

The project website is [www.streamlinedsalestax.org](http://www.streamlinedsalestax.org).